

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 017155

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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FOL REPEAT COPENHAGEN 0187 SENT ACTION SECSTATE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 0187

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR US DA XA

SUBJ: BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON AFRICA

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR WITMAN HAD USEFUL TOUR D'HORIZON OF AFRICAN
SCENE AT DANISH MFA JANUARY 21, WITH DANES SHOWING PARTICULAR INTER-
EST IN AFRICAN ROLE AT UNITED NATIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR PORTUGUESE
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PAGE 02 STATE 017155

COLONIES. THEY WERE ALSO VERY EAGER TO HEAR US VIEWS ON INTERRELATION-

SHIP BETWEEN BLACK AFRICANS AND ARABS AND POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS ON OIL CRISIS. DANES EXPRESSED KEEN GRATITUDE FOR OPPORTUNITY TO DRAW ON AMBASSADOR'S EXPERIENCE IN ORDER IMPROVE THEIR OWN LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF AFRICAN AREA.
END SUMMARY.

1. AMB. WITMAN SPENT FIVE HOURS ON JANUARY 21 WITH KEY MFA OFFICERS DEALING WITH AFRICAN AFFAIRS. DANISH GROUP WAS HEADED BY DEPARTMENT HEAD THORNING-PETERSEN, WHOSE RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE UN, MIDDLE EAST, FAR EAST AND LATIN AMERICAN, AS WELL AS AFRICAN AFFAIRS. HE EXPLAINED THAT DANISH INTEREST IN AFRICA WAS CONCENTRATED LARGELY IN UN POLITICAL FIELD BECAUSE OF INCREASING ROLE OF AFRICANS IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY. DANES ALSO HAVE MODEST AID PROGRAM IN AFRICA, BUT THIS IS DISTINCTLY SECONDARY INTEREST.

2. WITMAN EMPHASIZED THAT HIS VISIT WAS IN RESPONSE TO DANISH INVITATION AND THAT US NOT TRYING TO SELL A PARTICULAR APPROACH. AS DANES SHOWED KEEN INTEREST IN INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BLACK AFRICANS AND ARABS AND POSSIBLE IMPACT OF THIS ON OIL PROBLEM, MUCH OF THE DISCUSSION WAS DEVOTED TO NORTHERN AFRICA. WITMAN STRESSED NEW SENSE OF SOLIDARITY AND STRENGTH IN AFRICA SINCE OCTOBER WAR AND ONSET OF OIL CRISIS. BLACK AFRICANS HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED BY EXAMPLE OF ARABS, WHOM THEY SEE AS UNDERDEVELOPED PEOPLE CONFRONTING AND TRIUMPHING OVER COMBINED STRENGTH OF INDUSTRIAL WEST. WHETHER THIS SOLIDARITY WILL LAST IS NOT YET CLEAR, AND AFRICANS HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO FEEL PINCH OF ARAB OIL POLICIES. AFRICANS ARE BEGINNING TO THINK ABOUT POSSIBLE EXPLOITATION OF THEIR OWN RAW MATERIALS AS LEVERAGE ON WEST.

3. DANES ALSO EXPLORED QUESTION OF PORTUGUESE COLONIES AT SOME LENGTH, AS THIS IS OCCASIONALLY A POLITICAL ISSUE HERE. WITMAN REVIEWED US POLICY, EMPHASIZING NO CHANGE IN OUR SUPPORT FOR SELF DETERMINATION BUT WITHOUT USE OF VIOLENCE. DANES REITERATED THEIR OPPOSITION TO RECOGNITION OF GUINEA-BISSAU BECAUSE REBELS DO NOT CONTROL TERRITORY. THEY PROVIDED DETAILS OF THEIR ASSISTANCE TO LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, ALMOST ENTIRELY IN EDUCATIONAL FIELD.

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PAGE 03 STATE 017155

4. DANES SEEMED WORRIED ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF THEIR NEW MEMBERSHIP IN COMMITTEE OF 24, WHERE THEY ARE NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR ABILITY TO MODERATE RADICAL RESOLUTIONS.

5. COMMENT: DANES SHOWED A CLEAR INCLINATION TO DISTANCE THEMSELVES FROM MORE EXTREME STAND OF NEIGHBORING SCANDINAVIANS ON REBEL MOVEMENTS IN PORTUGUESE AFRICA BUT WERE NOT EXPLICIT ON THIS POINT. BY STRESSING IMPORTANCE OF COORDINATION AT FORTHCOMING NORDIC STAFF

AND MINISTERIAL LEVEL CONFERENCES, MOREOVER, THEY IMPLIED THAT THEIR
POSITION MIGHT MOVE IN DIRECTION OF NORWEGIANS AND SWEDES.
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